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1	IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT					
2	FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND					
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4	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA					
5	VS. CRIMINAL NO. CCB-08-0091					
6	BALRAJ NAIDU					
7	DEFENDANT					
8	Baltimore, Maryland					
9	July 9, 2010					
10						
11	The above-entitled case came on for a motions					
12	hearing before the Honorable Catherine C. Blake,					
13	United States District Judge					
14						
15	APPEARANCES					
16	<del></del>					
17						
18	For the Government:					
19	James G. Warwick, Esquire					
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21	For the Defendant:					
22	William B. Purpura, Jr., Esquire					
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24						
25	Gail A. Simpkins, RPR Official Court Reporter					

#### PROCEEDINGS

MR. WARWICK: May I call the case, Your Honor?

THE COURT: Sure.

MR. WARWICK: Your Honor, this is the matter of the United States of America versus Balraj Naidu. The Criminal Number is CCB-08-091. The matter is before the Court this morning for a hearing on the defense motion to dismiss Counts 2 and 6 of the indictment.

THE COURT: All right. Thank you.

Good morning.

MR. PURPURA: Your Honor, good morning, William Purpura on behalf of Balraj Naidu. Mr. Naidu is present.

THE DEFENDANT: Good morning.

MR. PURPURA: Your Honor, also listed I believe for this morning was a motion to suppress custodial statements. That motion is obviously a very brief motion. It's prophylactic in nature. We're not sure if there is going to an issue. Rather than bring witnesses from Singapore today, with the Court's permission, we will hold that off until and if there is a trial in October.

THE COURT: Okay. That makes sense to me.

MR. PURPURA: This is just oral argument. It shouldn't be too lengthy. Since it is my motion, does

1 the Court want to hear from me briefly?

THE COURT: I think that's probably a good idea. Now my understanding is that Counts 2 and 6 are the only ones here. Those are the only ones that your client was extradited on.

MR. PURPURA: That is correct.

MR. WARWICK: That is correct.

THE COURT: Count 2 being the conspiracy to provide material support and resources, and Count 6 being possession of firearms.

I did read the motions obviously. Obviously you're not contesting that Congress has said that 2339B should have extraterritorial application, but you don't think that your client fits into C or D or E as a matter of due process essentially?

MR. PURPURA: That is correct. Actually, I think we labeled that as -- one second, please, C, D and E.

Actually, in the motion, in our papers we said D, E and F, but it should be C, D and E, as the Court just indicated.

That is correct. We said, and we argued that he should not fit into that as well. We argued that.

Did the Court want to go through anything further?

THE COURT: No. You go ahead.

MR. PURPURA: Judge, for all the argument that we set forth, and a lot of the due process argument, perhaps it would be better raised as a Rule 29, when the evidence is before the Court. So at this point here, for the purpose of this motion, all the facts asserted in the indictment we must consider as proven.

In addition, we have no objection -- I'm not sure if the government submitted the affidavit by the case agent, but I will make that an exhibit motion, and we will assume for the purpose of this argument here that all the facts in that are accurate as well, which gives the Court a better factual background to work with.

THE COURT: All right. That would be helpful.

I don't think anyone has given me --

MR. WARWICK: If I may ask, is that the extradition affidavit?

MR. PURPURA: Yes, it is.

MR. WARWICK: Your Honor, the response filed by the United States is just utilizing the allegations contained in the indictment, and that's because of the standard of a motion to dismiss.

But we can certainly -- I have no objection to the extradition affidavit by Agent Burgess being part

1 of the record.

MR. PURPURA: Thank you. We will offer this as a joint exhibit for the purposes of the motion.

If I could approach?

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. PURPURA: It is the Affidavit in Support of Request for Extradition of Balraj Naidu. It is by Agent John Burgess.

THE COURT: Thank you.

(Joint Motion Exhibit Number 1 was received.)

MR. PURPURA: Just to briefly outline the facts as they are set forth in the affidavit, as well as the indictment itself, the starting person would be, at least in my estimation, a Mr. Santhirajah, and he is the person who is still pending extradition from Australia. He allegedly, according to the indictment and the affidavit, is attempting to obtain weapons for LTTE, the Tamil Tigers from Sri Lanka.

His first contact in the indictment is a Haniffa Bin Osman, who the Court is familiar with, who has pled guilty in this court before. As Bin Osman indicated in his guilty plea, as well as in the affidavit the Court has before it, he was contacted by Mr. Santhirajah first to obtain materials for his hotel, such as cleaning materials, because he had a

cleaning business. From cleaning materials, Bin Osman was asked if he could get computers, and he obtained computers, and from computers, he was then asked if he could obtain weapons for the Tamil Tigers, and he said I'll see what I can do.

He then, and we're not really sure how the contact occurs, but sometime in 2006, he has contact with Balraj Naidu, who is present here. There is a meeting February 9th of 2006 allegedly in Malaysia between the parties, and the discussion is we're going to obtain weapons for LTTE at that time.

From that point, February 9, 2006, there is a series of attempts by Mr. Naidu, according to the indictment, as well as the affidavit, to obtain these weapons. His contact is with China, Hong Kong, and Indonesia. It is not with the United States.

He is fruitless, Mr. Naidu, in his attempts to obtain weapons, to act as a middle for these attempts for weapons.

Then sometime in April of 2006, Mr. Haniffa Bin Osman becomes somewhat frustrated, we can only assume, and he seeks the services of someone else, and that someone else is Haji Subandi, S U B A N D I. We know that because on April 27th of 2006, Mr. Subandi then makes the first e-mail attempt, which is listed in the

affidavit, to the United States.

The contact in the United States is an undercover federal agency, and it is operated by a -the name given at that time is David Austin. What's important to note is that David Austin had contact with Mr. Subandi all the way back to March of 2004. So there has been contact from the United States with Subandi which precedes this, nothing to do with Naidu whatsoever. Naidu is fruitless in anything he attempted to do.

What then continues is a lengthy series of e-mails between, mainly between Subandi and the United States contact in an attempt to negotiate for these arms, and that's finally culminated September 28, 2006, when there's a wire transfer, and September 29th of 2006, when there are arrests of various gentlemen in Guam.

Now what's important to note is that Naidu doesn't come to the United States, is really, although he is mentioned in these e-mails, there is nothing of substance that has his involvement in any of these transactions during this period of time. At best, at best, he is a tagalong during this period of time, with the hope that he is going to get some sort of commission if this deal is consummated eventually, and

that's why he's there.

THE COURT: The allegation in the indictment is that on July 24th, he drove Mr. Bin Osman to the airport in Singapore for a flight to the U.S. --

MR. PURPURA: He does.

THE COURT: -- knowing that Bin Osman was going, and allegedly staying in touch with the negotiations by text message into the United States.

MR. PURPURA: I see that in the indictment, and I don't doubt, since we did speak to Mr. Bin Osman, that he will testify to that, and that will be a fact.

Again, there's nothing -- again, he drives him to the airport, but again, there's nothing of substance that he does. He acts as a cab at that point. He's not negotiating. He's not doing anything as far as to facilitate the contact with the United States, except staying in contact for what he hopes to be some money for the work that he did with his contact with China, Hong Kong and Indonesia, his very unsuccessful contact. All the time he remains in Singapore during this period of time here, without any travel to the United States.

That's basically the factual background. I understand what we have. What we are suggesting, number one, on the due process issue, why the

extraterritorial jurisdiction should not apply in this case, we suggest that it is tainted by the conduct of the United States and the agents.

Here, the only way the United States gets brought in is because of the prior March 2004 contact with this David Austin, the undercover agent for the United States, and Haji Subandi.

THE COURT: But I guess I don't see how that taints it. I mean what's the difference between this and sort of an ordinary sting operation, the government saying hi, we're here to sell you something illegal, would you like to buy something, and people, Mr. Subandi says okay, I'll take advantage of that?

MR. PURPURA: You know, at this point, based on the face of the indictment, what we have here, I understand the Court's rationale on that completely. I'm not sure of the context between the relationship or how that relationship became between the United States and Mr. Subandi. I'm not sure of that. That may be an issue, and that may or may not be fleshed out during the trial. But I completely understand the Court's position on that. I'm not sure of the scope of the relationship or how Subandi became to deal with the United States.

But I guess the simple point on this, as well as

the second part of the argument, which is even if jurisdiction is granted, the conduct of Mr. Naidu is so minimal that it would be difficult for him to reasonably anticipate being haled into a court in the United States based on the conduct of others.

THE COURT: But again, just going on the indictment, if he is allegedly part of a conspiracy that knows that it is attempting to purchase weapons from the United States, isn't that enough?

I mean a lot of the cases deal the other way because it is drugs being imported into the United States, something coming in, and that's clearly enough.

I guess I'm not sure why if the object is to get a whole bunch of weapons from a whole bunch of U.S. manufacturers, which is what's in the indictment, and ship it someplace, why you wouldn't think you might be doing business with the United States, sufficiently to be haled into that jurisdiction.

MR. PURPURA: I understand the Court's argument, and we presented it based on the indictment. So whether the evidence will be any different at the time of trial, I don't know. But in essence, that would be the argument on that issue itself.

THE COURT: Yeah. Now tell me about the 924(c).

MR. PURPURA: That, hopefully, I think that was the argument that I think is of particular interest here. I think it's a completely different argument than what we just presented here. This argument was presented to preserve whatever record we could possibly have, and we have done that in this case.

THE COURT: Sure.

MR. PURPURA: When we first looked at the indictment, without doing any research, and there's very limited research on this issue, it just seemed to me from the basic reading of the enhancement provision — we know what 924(c) is — it seems that Congress intended it as a punishment in addition to the crime itself, because you have enhanced the crime when you are using a weapon in furtherance of the crime. Logically, that just makes sense.

The simple example is in a bank robbery, you go in and you commit a bank robbery and it's a particular crime. You commit a bank robbery with a gun, and it is enhanced under 924(c). If you rob a second bank, the penalties increase there from five, the mandatory minimum, to 25, and etcetera.

That just makes sense because you are taking the substantive crime and you are enhancing it. You are enhancing the danger of the crime itself because

you're adding the element of the weapon.

The same thing with a narcotics transaction. You can have a conspiracy, as in here, a conspiracy to distribute narcotics. What enhances the danger of the conspiracy to distribute the narcotics is the use of the gun and I think, which is the key, especially in the narcotics realm is in furtherance of.

As the Court in <u>Bailey</u> indicated, furtherance is a very important element. It's not just the possession of it. It has got to be in furtherance of it.

So if you set aside multiplicitous, and I incorrectly said duplicitous, which I agree, and you really look at the plain language of 924(c), it simply, it simply means that it has to embolden, or it is there to protect the people who are committing the crime. It must be in furtherance, and it has to enhance the crime itself.

I don't see it here. What this crime here is, and it is obviously a very serious crime, but the crime here is the supplying material support. What the material support is in this particular case is weapons that at this level, in the indictment and in the affidavit, and anything so far that has been disclosed, there is nothing at all to indicate that

1 the crime was enhanced by using a weapon in furtherance of that conspiracy, which is --2 3 THE COURT: Or possessing, or possessing. 4 MR. PURPURA: Right. 5 THE COURT: We're not talking using, right? We 6 are talking about possession in terms of six. 7 MR. PURPURA: Possession in furtherance. THE COURT: The factual underlying part of this, 8 9 also I want to make sure I understand, the date 10 alleged is September 26th of 2006. So my 11 understanding is that's when certain people meet in 12 Guam --13 MR. PURPURA: Correct. 14 THE COURT: -- to look at weapons which might be 15 purchased. 16 MR. PURPURA: Actually, you don't have this 17 information before you now, but I have no problem 18 fleshing this out, because it's important. 19 You can assume for the purpose of this hearing 20 that when Bin Osman came to the United States, he 21 tested weapons. He actually possessed the weapon. He 22 tested the weapon, and weapons were actually tested 23 and possessed by him at that time. That was sometime I believe in April of 2006. 24 25 THE COURT: But Count 6 --

1 MR. PURPURA: Summer of 2006. Excuse me. 2 THE COURT: I'm sorry. Count 6 only relates to 3 the September 26th transaction as far as I can see. MR. PURPURA: Let me take a quick look. 4 5 MR. WARWICK: That is correct, Your Honor. 6 THE COURT: I don't see Mr. -- let's just 7 interrupt for a minute. 8 What is the theory of Mr. Naidu's possessing 9 firearms on September 26th? 10 MR. WARWICK: It's a Pinkerton application, Your Honor, because the conspiracy to provide material 11 12 support for the terrorist organization is the 13 underlying crime of violence. The case law is clear 14 that a conspiracy can support a 924(c) charge. 15 THE COURT: Well, a conspiracy can be the 16 underlying crime of violence. 17 MR. WARWICK: It is. On that particular date in 18 September of 2006, there was a meeting in Guam, and 19 that was different from the test-firing of the weapons 20 in Maryland. 21 THE COURT: Right. 22 MR. WARWICK: Test-firing of the weapons is part 23 of the negotiation process. After the weapons were 24 tested, and reports made back to the Tamil 25 representatives, then the purchase authorizations were approved. In August of 2006, there was a first wire transfer of over 400,000.

Then in Guam, after the weapons were physically present in Guam, they were inspected. They were broken down by Mr. Varatharasa and others. Mr. Naidu was still part of the conspiracy. He still stood to physically, I'm sorry, to financially profit from the arms deal, because he was to share a commission with Mr. Bin Osman and with others for setting up this deal.

THE COURT: So you are saying Mr. Naidu would be liable under the <a href="Pinkerton">Pinkerton</a> theory --

MR. WARWICK: That is correct.

THE COURT: -- for Mr. Varatharasa's inspection of the guns?

MR. WARWICK: Right. There were a number of co-conspirators on Guam at that time. Inspecting the weapons were Bin Osman and Varatharasa.

Varatharasa, that was his specialty. He was sent specifically by the Tamil Tigers for the purpose of inspecting the weapons. He broke the weapons down. It's all on videotape. He inspected the weapons, made certain complaints concerning aspects of the weaponry as not being completely new as ordered. They had been refurbished, things like that.

THE COURT: Those weapons were the -- well, I guess a couple things.

In terms of possession, you would be relying on through Pinkerton.

MR. WARWICK: That's correct.

THE COURT: -- the actual physical possession, the fact that Mr. Bin Osman had his hands on the weapons?

MR. WARWICK: Yes.

THE COURT: They were not taken into, other than that, I mean they were not taken into the dominion and control of the conspiracy, right?

MR. WARWICK: They were in a warehouse and where they were handled, inspected. The second part of the payment was wired, and at that point the guns, as per the intent of the co-conspirators, were to be loaded, transferred from the warehouse to a ship that ICE had arranged as kind of a sham or a screen to create the illusion that there would actually be a transfer.

Then when the last co-conspirator arrived on Guam, and that would have been Mr. Wotulo -- the Court may recall, he was the one who had calculated the route through Indonesian waters, and he was also again part of the conspiracy in the acquisition process.

Once he came in, the weapons were to be loaded

that day or transferred to the ship, but everyone was arrested.

So the possessory aspect was that they were going through all the weapons, and they were testing the weapons for their efficacy.

THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.

MR. PURPURA: Judge, I did not raise the possessory issue, but the Court has on its own, and I think it's an important issue here.

As we fleshed out the facts a little more, the weapons actually never become in the dominion and control of any of the co-conspirators. At best, they are being monitored by government agents as they take a look at the weapons and see if they are workable.

But that's on the possessory issue as well, the argument which I posed, and I think that's a very good argument.

THE COURT: You've got a separate argument, right, the furtherance.

MR. PURPURA: Exactly. Whether you possess or use, it's not in furtherance. It is the conspiracy itself, the weapons here.

Obviously you can, if it's a conspiracy to interdict an arms shipment within the United States, and you use a weapon to embolden or enhance or just

possess a weapon to embolden or enhance that conspiracy, then the 924(c) would be applicable, and that's clearly the intent of Congress itself.

But if no weapon is used, because the shipment is guns, I don't believe again that the 924(c) applies, because it doesn't enhance, embolden. It's not used or possessed to further the conspiracy.

As I pointed out as well, in the statute itself, it really doesn't seem to make sense. That 2339B, some of the substances which are outlined obviously are weapons, but also lethal substances, lethal gases and explosives, and there's no punishment in 924(c). There's no enhancement for those.

The enhancement in the statute itself in 2339B is that if death occurs, it can be any period of incarceration increased from 15 up to life itself.

So under the plain reading of 924(c), in combination of 18 U.S.C. 2339B, the application of the enhancement just should not apply, in addition to the Court's argument or the Court's issue which was raised, as far as actual possession on the date charged in the indictment, that it was not possession in the true sense because it was never dominion and control. It was at best just to look at the guns itself to inspect them. There was no transfer of

dominion and control to any of the co-defendants in this particular case.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. PURPURA: Thank you.

THE COURT: Thank you.

MR. WARWICK: Your Honor, briefly, as far as the 924 issue, the possession need only be to further, advance or help forward a crime of violence, and the physical inspection, the breaking down of the components of these weapons, even though in the presence of the agents, certainly constituted possession in furtherance, because it did advance the purchase and the purpose of the conspiracy.

THE COURT: I don't see how you distinguish between the possession of the weapons as just the ultimate goal of the conspiracy and the in furtherance part.

When I think of a 924(c), here's conspiracy number one, and it has got its objective, which the common one is to rob the store, and you are possessing a firearm here in furtherance of it, or you're dealing drugs out of your apartment and your gun is sitting over here. So the possession of the gun furthers it because it emboldens you or protects the drugs or what have you.

Here, it just seems to me it's the same thing.

I am having trouble understanding the distinction
between providing material support, i.e., firearms,
and possessing the firearms.

MR. WARWICK: Well, the possession of the firearms were by Bin Osman and Varatharasa on behalf of the conspiracy. They inspected them.

The key test is not whether or not the government agents were present, and the key is not whether or not the guns were ever going to be allowed to be loaded on that ship and transferred to Sri Lanka.

THE COURT: Right.

MR. WARWICK: The key aspect is the state of mind of the co-conspirators and whether, as a factual basis, their possession of these firearms, even though temporary, advanced or forwarded, or was in furtherance of the intended transfer of these weapons to the LTTE. I think the facts will show that it was the case that their state of mind, they were there to inspect --

THE COURT: Are you saying that any 2339B that involves weapons automatically includes a 924(c)?

MR. WARWICK: That is correct. As long as the weapons were at sometime possessed or used, that would

qualify.

THE COURT: Well, they are going to have to be possessed.

MR. WARWICK: Oh, no.

THE COURT: It's going to be an object at least. The object would be to possess them.

MR. WARWICK: They don't necessarily have to be possessed. For instance, there have been cases where the agreements or the conspiratorial crime itself has involved attempts to purchase surface-to-air-missiles for a third party country, and there have been money transfers and other exchange of weapon, specific information. That would constitute the conspiracy. But because there wasn't any actual transfer, whether temporary or permanent transfer of the weaponry, you would have only the conspiracy and not the 924(c).

But because this is different, because there was a temporary possession of these weapons by Bin Osman and Varatharasa, I think under the standards of the motion to dismiss, it does on its face state a crime.

THE COURT: I mean there may be an issue about procedurally where we are, comparing the language of the indictment to what I think the facts are. You sort of alluded to this at the beginning. I mean I may have a Rule 29 issue.

MR. WARWICK: Candidly, Your Honor, Mr.

Purpura's argument is more appropriate in terms of a

Rule 29 application than it is to a motion to dismiss,

because the standard is certainly different. I do

expect that the evidence will establish through the

witnesses the specific reason for the possession of

the weapons, albeit temporary, but it would constitute

that crime.

MR. PURPURA: Judge, if I may. Assume that there was possession just for this, and I don't believe there was, but assume for this purpose there was possession. Still, I think the key of the other key argument which I'm making is, and that the Court obviously picked up on, is it is not in furtherance of the conspiracy. It is part of the conspiracy itself.

If the government has any factual allegation now that they can present, then I'll concede that I will deem it was proven for part of this motion if at any time a weapon was used, and the common intent of 924(c) that Congress intended, to further the object of the conspiracy itself, and not being the object of the conspiracy, which was the possession.

THE COURT: As I understand his argument at the moment, it is that even though this would presumably still be sort of an overt act in the conspiracy, isn't

it, even though it's an overt act, certainly it's an action taken in furtherance of the conspiracy. You've got to test your weapons.

That the fact of doing that, physically possessing the weapons and testing them is in furtherance of the ultimate aim of getting these same weapons into the hands of the foreign terrorists.

Simply looking at the indictment, and again, I'm coming back to my procedural problem, it could be that the facts supported something that you and I might agree was in furtherance. If they went to inspect the weapons that were the object of the conspiracy, and they brought with them their machine gun to protect themselves, that's a different situation.

MR. PURPURA: We agree. That seems to be -
THE COURT: If all I have in front of me is the indictment, we come back to this. I don't know. We at least have, we certainly have -- what I understand to be the factual proffer from the government is what they've just made and perhaps what's in this affidavit.

MR. WARWICK: That is correct, Your Honor. As I said, what I said by way of proffer as far as the state of mind of Mr. Varatharasa and Mr. Bin Osman, when they inspected those weapons, the government

contends that that is the possession in furtherance.

Even though it was temporary possession, it was

certainly an overt act in furtherance of the

conspiracy, but it also constitutes a separate crime.

It is certainly not a multiplication crime because it

has different elements than the conspiracy count set

forth in Count 2.

THE COURT: This is an interesting question.

MR. PURPURA: It's also a very important question because the enhancement here is 30 years consecutive time if in fact it was machine guns, which I believe they probably can use, on top of the 15 years. So it's a life sentence versus a sentence under the Guidelines even if he goes to trial and is found guilty, which could be in the five to seven year range. So it's a very important question.

That's why the 924(c) enhancement is used to punish those who merely use those weapons to further the object. That's why it really doesn't makes sense. If Congress intended that, they would have put that in this particular statute, and they didn't.

Counsel, Mr. Warwick mentioned the surface-to-air-missile. That wouldn't be a 924(c). The surface-to-air-missiles, there would be no enhancement. That just doesn't make sense.

If they would have bought lethal gas, which could destroy an entire country, there would be no enhancement, even if they picked it up and test it chemically.

You never use the rule of lenity, and here, you probably should use the rule of lenity because if you're going to construe the statute, it should be construed favorably to the defendant. 924(c) is just not designed for this type of offense, and there's no case law. There's nothing on it.

THE COURT: No. I was hoping you all might have given me more than what seems to be out there.

MR. WARWICK: Your Honor, I can certainly go back and see what else is out there, but I disagree with what Mr. Purpura has just said.

The penalties involved here certainly are stiff. But if we are talking equities, we're also talking almost a million dollars worth of sophisticated weaponry that were intended to kill many, many other people.

But one of the things I brought to Mr. Purpura's attention, and I would like to bring to the Court's attention, is that in May of this year, the Supreme Court decided the matter of <u>U.S. versus O'Brien</u>.

Essentially the Supreme Court resolved a slit among

the Circuits concerning the enhancements under 924(c), specifically the machine gun enhancement.

Certainly under the holding of that case, whether or not a machine gun is involved is not a question to be resolved by the Court at sentencing. It's a jury question.

I'm awaiting guidance from the Department as to whether or not, in the Department's assessment of O'Brien, that fact has to be pleaded in the indictment as well. If it does have to be pleaded, then I will certainly advise Mr. Purpura of that, and I will certainly also undertake discussions with the Department as far as the appropriateness of it as well.

But penalties in my view don't justify a different interpretation of the statute or the law.

It's whether or not the elements are there on its face at this point, and subject to Rule 29 constraints, whether the government has proven those elements.

THE COURT: Okay. I need to think about all of this a little bit longer, and I need to take short recess.

Actually, if you all couple just hang out a little bit and come back into chambers in about ten minutes?

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1	MR. WARWICK:	Very good,	Your Honor.	
2	MR. PURPURA:	Certainly.		
3	THE COURT: T	hank you.		
4	(The proceedi	ngs conclude	ed.)	
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# REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript in the matter of United States of America vs. Balraj
Naidu, Defendant, Criminal Action No. CCB-08-0091,
before the Honorable Catherine C. Blake, United States
District Judge, on July 9, 2010 is true and accurate.

Gail A. Simpkins

Official Court Reporter

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